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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m.

The Reverend Michael Dolan, Pastor, Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, Lexington Park, Maryland, offered the following prayer:

Almighty God, give us light and strength to know Your will, to make it our own, and to live it in our lives.

Guide us by Your wisdom, support us by Your power, for You are God.

You desire justice for all: Enable us to uphold the rights of others; do not allow us to be misled by ignorance or corrupted by fear or favor.

Unite us to Yourself in the bond of love, and keep us faithful to all that is true.

As we gather in Your name, may we temper justice with love, so that all Your decisions may be pleasing to You and earn the rewards promised to good and faithful servants. Therefore, teach us to be generous, to serve You as You deserve, to give and not to count the cost, to fight and not to heed the wounds, to toil and ask for no reward except that of knowing that we are doing Your holy will. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

Mr. McNULTY. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER. The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The question was taken; and the Speaker announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. McNULTY. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to clause 8, rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GREEN) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. GREEN of Texas led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. Under clause 2 of rule I, it is the responsibility of the Speaker to preserve order and decorum in the proceedings of the House. As stated on page 330 of the House Rules and Manual, this responsibility requires that the Chair disallow the use of an exhibit that tends to degrade decorum. Thus, the Speakers previously have disallowed the introduction of a person on the floor as a guest of the House as an "exhibit."

Pursuant to clause 2 of rule I, the Chair reiterates the ruling of June 11, 2003, that it is inappropriate to use Pages of the House as part of a visual exhibit during debate. Although Members may enlist the assistance of Pages to manage the placement of exhibits on easels, it is not appropriate to use Pages as though part of an exhibit or otherwise include them in an exhibit.

The Chair also will continue to scrutinize the number of charts and other visual exhibits used simultaneously during the debate for any tendency to impair decorum.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain five 1-minute speeches on each side.

FREE DR. OSCAR BISCET

(Mr. SMITH of New Jersey asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, on March 18 the Cuban Government began a massive crackdown on the best, the brightest, and the most courageous in Cuba. Some 75 journalists and human rights activists were arrested and subjected to kangaroo trials and now have gotten prison terms from 6 to 28 years.

Last week Amnesty International called it the most severe crackdown on dissidents since the year following the Cuban revolution.

Sadly, these brave Cubans join 400 other political prisoners who are languishing in Castro's gulags. Their only crime is their love of freedom.

Among those unjustly imprisoned, is Dr. Oscar Biscet, a pro-life Afro-Cuban who has been a leader in the human rights movement for years. Although he was recently released, Mr. Speaker, from a 3-year term, he was rearrested, and now has been sentenced to 25 years in prison for organizing a human rights meeting.

His wife, Elsa Morejon, reports that Dr. Biscet is kept in a 6 by 3 punishment cell. They have been refused any visits and any kind of parcels of food or medicines. On May 28 Dr. Biscet wrote, "I am innocent of the charges of which I have been condemned. A true man cannot betray himself, so I only appeal to the living God and pray to our Lord, as He is not neutral and never abandons his flock."

According to his wife, Dr. Biscet's only crime is trying to observe and uphold the universal declaration on

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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human rights, his opposition to abortion, his opposition to the death penalty, and for organizing civil rights movement through nonviolent civil disobedience.

We join this man and his wife and all of those who are suffering. We have got to speak out and not give up until they are free.

MISUSE OF FEDERAL POWER

(Mr. GREEN of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, we have so much to be proud of in our country: our young people serving in the military, protecting our Nation, our law enforcement working long hours to make us safe. We can even celebrate last night the Houston Astros winning a no-hitter against the New York Yankees with six pitchers.

What we cannot be proud of and what bothers many Americans is we have had three different congressional committee members ask the Department of Homeland Security, the Department of Justice, and the FBI to release all the information and audiotapes concerning the use of our Federal law enforcement to track Texas legislators. This sounds like an abuse of authority, and it smells.

Our law enforcement should not be used for partisan political purposes. Release these tapes and let the American people decide who is wasting our law enforcement's time, when they should be protecting our Nation, looking for Texas legislators.

FREE MARTA BEATRIZ ROQUE

(Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, today we speak of a heroine, an extraordinary woman and leader who languishes in Castro's gulag, Marta Beatriz Roque, sentenced to 25 years for speaking her mind on behalf of freedom and democracy.

To those who wish to send billions of dollars to the dictatorship in Cuba by sending U.S. tourists to savor tropical drinks in the tourism apartheid resorts and take advantage of the regime-encouraged child prostitution, I think it is worthwhile to listen to Marta Beatriz, one of the last statements before she was picked up and sent to a gulag for 25 years.

We exhort all the governments of the civilized world not to prolong the agony of the Cuban people, not to finance the tyranny, not to support the tyranny; that they condemn the tourism apartheid, that they condemn the exploitation of laborers, the prostitution of our youth, the traffic of stolen property, the plunder of the Cuban nation. Solidarity is required today with those who advocated freedom in Cuba

and those who also advocated freedom in exile.

Marta Beatriz Roque and all of the Cuban political prisoners, we do not forget you for one day. We will continue to fight until you are free and until all Cubans are free.

GROWING BUDGET DEFICIT

(Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to voice my anger, my anger over the Bush administration's willingness to plunge our economy further into debt.

The Congressional Budget Office had projected that this year's shortfall to the budget would be \$300 billion. But recently they came back and they now tell us it is going to be over \$400 billion.

This year's budget deficit will be the biggest one since 1992 and it will be the second consecutive one under this President after we had 4 years of surplus by President Clinton's administration.

Instead of enacting fiscally responsible legislation, this administration continues to do further tax cuts for the wealthy. Former President Clinton recently said, When you find yourself in a hole, a practical person stops digging. But this Bush administration, it is asking for a bigger shovel.

Mr. Speaker, it is time to stop digging. Fiscal responsibility needs to be the rule and not the exception to the rule.

□ 1015

WESTERN SAHARA

(Mr. PITTS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, I am deeply concerned that the negotiations over the Western Sahara for the past decade have all been for nothing.

Former Moroccan Minister of Interior Driss Basri recently said, "The Houston agreement did not come as a way to find a solution to the issue of Sahara. It came as a starting point of an American plan . . . and it will preserve the American interests," and as U.N. diplomat Marrack Goulding wrote, "for enhanced autonomy for Western Sahara within the kingdom of Morocco."

I find it deplorable and offensive that various officials of Morocco, the U.N., and the U.S. engaged in what amounted to a farce. They spent over \$530 million and negotiated an agreement to hold a referendum for the people of Western Sahara without ever intending to hold that referendum.

Mr. Speaker, this is not a game. The people of Western Sahara agreed to a ceasefire on the basis that all parties

would uphold the negotiated agreement of a free, fair, and transparent referendum for self-determination. The people of Western Sahara have no desire to suffer under the colonial rule of the kingdom of Morocco; and so the United States, the U.N., and Morocco should stop the game-playing and implement the referendum.

TAKE UP THE SENATE-PASSED CHILD TAX CREDIT

(Mr. DEFAZIO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, it has been nearly 2 weeks since the embarrassing revelations that the \$350 billion Republican tax cut left behind 6.5 million working families with incomes of \$10,000 to \$27,000 a year. Not a penny to them and their 12 million children. They were stiffed to make room for more millionaire tax cuts.

Last week, the Senate rushed to fix this. The President has endorsed what the Senate did; and if the Republican leaders here in the House really cared about these families and their kids, they would take up, pass the Senate bill today, send it down to the President tonight, get him to sign it; and they could get refund checks next month along with other families. But, no, that is not what they are going to do.

They are going to turn these families into second-class citizens. If this bill passes today, they can file for the money next year. A lot of working families with parents in combat will be excluded under this bill. They will be left out altogether, but it really does one thing that they really want to do. It assures this bill will not become law because they really do not care about those 6.5 million families and their 12 million kids. They are low-income people. They do not care.

CALL FOR RESPONSIBLE FATHERHOOD

(Mr. RYUN of Kansas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. RYUN of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, as we approach Father's Day, I rise to emphasize the importance of the father in a child's life. A father's presence at home contributes to a child's success in school. It also encourages a child to abstain from drugs and remain crime-free. Until we recognize these facts, we will struggle to defeat many of society's problems.

We provide funding to alleviate problems that are caused by absent fathers, but what we really need are fathers who are physically, emotionally, and spiritually present in their child's life.

I hope that this Father's Day will not just be a day for children to honor their fathers, but also a day for fathers to honor their children by investing in their lives.